

REMARKS:

Applicant notes that this response uses the new revised format for amendments set forth at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/dapp/opla/preognotice/officeflyer.pdf>.

Status

After this response, claims 1 to 6 and 8 to 13 are pending. Claims 1, 3 and 4 have been amended, claim 7 has been cancelled, and claims 8 to 13 have been added. Claims 1, 3, 8 and 13 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,680,781 (Amundson). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,574,722 (Slykhous). Claims 3 and 5 were rejected under § 103(a) over Amundson in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,457,055 (Hwong).

Claim 1: This claim, as amended, is reproduced below:

1. A method, including steps of
at a first device coupled to a communication link, generating at least one first message to a set of second devices coupled to said communication link, said one first message being disposed so that its receipt at said set of second devices causes said set of second devices to generate one or more second messages in response thereto;

monitoring a number of said second messages received at said first device;

determining whether or not a protocol mismatch exists between said first device and any of said set of second devices, in response to said number of said second messages.

The art applied against claim 1, namely Amundson, is not seen by Applicant to disclose or to suggest the foregoing feature of claim 1, at least with respect to “determining whether or not a protocol mismatch exists ... in response to said number of said second messages [received at said first device].”

In this regard, originally-filed claim 7 recited “wherein said step of monitoring includes determining whether or not there are a relatively normal number of said second messages received at said first device.” The Office Action cited col. 2, lines 50 and 51, of Amundson as teaching this feature.

The cited portion of Amundson states the following: “[T]he link protocol establishes whether the connection will be half- or full-duplex, how many data messages can be sent before confirmation is required, the size of a single data packet, etc.” Applicant sees no mention in this language of determining whether or not a protocol mismatch exists based on how many data messages are received. Rather, the language indicates to Applicants that the “protocol establishes ... how many data messages can be sent,” which is entirely different.

Nothing else in Amundson is seen by Applicant to discuss determining whether or not a protocol mismatch exists based on how many data messages are received. Accordingly, Amundson is not seen to disclose or to suggest claim 1’s feature of “determining whether or not a

protocol mismatch exists ... in response to said number of said second messages [received at said first device].”

Applicant has studied the references applied against the dependent claims and does not see anything in them that remedies the foregoing deficiency of Amundson.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal are respectfully requested of the rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claims 2 and 4 to 6, as is allowance of those claims.

Claim 3: This claim, as amended, is reproduced below:

3. A method, including steps of
at a first device coupled to a communication link, generating at least one first message to a set of second devices coupled to said communication link, said one first message being disposed so that its receipt at said set of second devices causes said set of second devices to generate one or more second messages in response thereto;
monitoring receipt of said second messages at said first device;
at said first device, generating at least one third message to said set of second devices, said one third message being generated in an attempt to interfere with communication on said communication link when said communication link is configured as half-duplex; and
determining whether or not a protocol mismatch exists between said first device and any of said set of second devices in response to whether or not said attempt to interfere succeeds.

The art applied against claim 3, namely Amundson and Hwong, is not seen by Applicant to disclose or to suggest the foregoing feature of claim 3, at least with respect to “generating at least one ... message [in] an attempt to interfere with communication on said communication link when said communication link is configured as half-duplex.”

In this regard, originally-filed claim 3 recited “generating at least one-third message ... disposed so that it interferes with communication on said communication link when

said communication link is configured as half-duplex.” The Office Action cited col. 1, lines 36 to 42, of Hwong as teaching this feature.

The cited portion of Hwong states the following: “A collision (or conflict) occurs when two stations listen for network traffic, ‘hear’ none, and transmit simultaneously. In such a case, both transmissions are damaged and the stations must back off and retransmit at some later time.” To Applicant, this language discusses the possibility of a collision. The language does not appear to Applicant to contemplate attempting to create a collision.

Nothing else in Hwong appears to Applicant to discuss attempting to create a collision. Accordingly, Hwong is not seen to disclose or to suggest claim 3’s feature of “generating at least one ... message [in] an attempt to interfere with communication on said communication link when said communication link is configured as half-duplex.”

Applicant has studied remaining references cited in the Office Action and does not see anything in them that remedies the foregoing deficiency of Hwong. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal are respectfully requested of the rejection of claim 3, as is allowance of that claim.

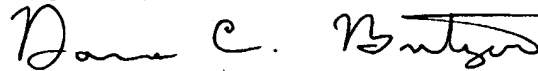
New Claims 8 to 13: Claim 8 recites a device that implements the method of claim 1. Claims 9 to 12 depend from claim 8. Claim 13 recites a method that implements the method of claim 3. Accordingly, allowance of these claims also is respectfully requested.

Closing

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney can be reached at (614) 486-3585. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the address indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dane C. Butzer", written over a horizontal line.

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